

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TRIPOL 01208 111545Z

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCA-01 OC-06 CCO-00 PPT-02 SS-15 NSC-10

PRS-01 A-01 EUR-25 VO-03 DRC-01 RSC-01 /085 W

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P R 111501Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0628

INFO USINT CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 1208

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CVIS, CPAS, LY

SUBJECT: PASSPORT PROBLEM

REF: STATE 201013

1. CONSOFF SPOKE TO MFA CHIEF OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS HUBAYSHI OCT 11 AND ASKED IF ZAGGAR HAD RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS RE MCCREADY'S VISA. HUBAYSHI SAID HE HAD. CONSOFF THEN SAID, IF SO IS THERE A PROBLEM? HUBAYSHI SAID YES, THERE IS: ZAGGAR'S INSTRUCTIONS ARE THAT HE MUST OBTAIN A STATEMENT THAT THE USG "ACCEPTS THE PRINCIPLE OF ARABIC IN PASSPORTS, JUST AS ALL OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE DONE".

2. CONSOFF ALSO SOUGHT CONFIRMATION ON PERMISSION TO ENTER LAR FOR TOURISTS STRANDED IN CAIRO. HUBAYSHI SAID IMMIGRATION (INTERIOR) HAD "MADE ALL ARRANGEMENTS" AND "THERE SHOULD BE NO PROBLEM". ASKED IF AMERICANS WOULD HAVE ANY PROBLEMS, HUBAYSHI REPLIED THAT PASSPORTS IN ARABIC WOULD NOT BE REQUIRED IN THIS CASE. HE WAS, HOWEVER, UNABLE TO CONFIRM WHETHER VISAS WOULD BE WAIVED, STATING THIS WAS UP TO IMMIGRATION, WHO WOULD PROCESS THE TOURISTS AT THE BORDER.

3. COMMENT: THIS IS BETTER THAN PAR FOR THE COURSE IN GETTING CLARIFICATION OUT OF MFA. OUR CONCLUSIONS ARE:
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PAGE 02 TRIPOL 01208 111545Z

A. MFA SENSES VICTORY AND IS NOT GOING TO SETTLE FOR ANYTHING LESS THAN A STATEMENT IN WRITING FROM THE USG, AND THAT STATEMENT MUST COZC QPDHQDKFS UJASE#THAT THE USG "ACCEPTS ARABIC IN PASSPORTS".

B. ONCE THAT IS DONE, THERE MY BE A PERIOD OF FLEXIBILITY ON LARG DEMAND, ON THE PRACTICAL GROUND THAT IT TAKES TIME TO COMPLY FULLY. THIS HAS BEEN THE PATTERN TO DATE.

C. NEVERTHELESS, THE MFA AND IMMIGRATION WILL DOGGEDLY PURSUE THE AIM OF COMPLETE COMPLIACNE, WHICH AT LEAST RAISES THE QUESTION FOR US WHETHER ANY OTHER LINE OF RESISTANCE IS WORTH HOLDING.

D. WE CAN FACE THAT PROBLEM LATER, BUT GIVEN OUR GUIDANCE THERE IS NO POINT IN FURTHER DELAY IN GETTING MCCREADY'S VISA, I.E. SUBMITTING THE MAGIC STATEMENT. IT DOES NOT MATTER THAT THE FRENCH AND OTHERS GOT BY WITH LESS (NOTHING IN WRITING). THE ANTE IS UP.

E. WE LOSE SOME FACE AND THE LARG'S EGO INFLATES, BUT AT LEAST THESE CONSEQUENCES ARE MINIMIZED IF WE CRATER UNDER WARTIME CONDITIONS. ALSO, FOR CONSIDERATION, WE COULD LINK OUR ACCEPTANCE TO LARG'S COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE RE AMERICAN TOURISTS IN EGYPT -- THANK THEM FOR IT AND SAY THAT IN VIEW OF IT WE ARE COOPERATING TOO.

4. REQUEST THAT WE GET ON WITH THIS BUSINESS IMMEDIATELY AND GET MCCREADY OUT HERE ASAP. JOSIF

NOTE BY OCT: #AS RECEIVED. WILL BE SERVICED UPON REQUEST.

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NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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